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Cameras in the Courtroom

Forms:

- Media Request to Photograph, Record, or Broadcast [Form MC-500](#) | [Information about Form MC-500](#)
- Media Request to Permit Coverage [Form MC-510](#) | [Information about Form MC-510](#)
This form contains details about what is and isn't permitted, including personnel and equipment in the courtroom.

Under [Rule 1.150](#), the "Cameras Rule", judges use discretion when allowing cameras and other recording devices into their courtroom.

The process for media when making a request:

- The media must use both [Form MC-500](#) AND [Form MC-510](#) to submit their request;
- Request(s) must be submitted at least five court days before the portion of the proceeding to be covered begins (note: if good cause is shown, a judge may accept the request with shorter notice);
- The court clerk must notify the judge that a request has been filed;
- If a judge has not been assigned, the request will be submitted to the judge supervising the calendar department;
- The two completed, signed forms become a part of the permanent court record.

Rule 1.150:

- Leaves to judges' the discretion to allow the use of cameras in all areas, including all pretrial hearings in criminal cases;
- Prohibits camera coverage of jury selection, jurors, and spectators in the courtroom;

- Lists **18 factors a judge must consider in ruling on a request for camera coverage**— including the importance of maintaining public access to the courtroom, preserving the privacy rights of the participants in the proceedings, and the effect of camera coverage on counsel's ability to select an unbiased jury;
- Continues to ban cameras at proceedings held in chambers or closed to the public; conferences between an attorney and a client, witness, or aide or between attorneys; and conferences between counsel and the judge at the bench; and
- Since Jan 1, 2006, includes new digital technologies, such as camera cell phones, in the restrictions on the use of photographing, recording, and broadcasting in state courtrooms and makes these technologies subject to a judicial order permitting their use.

Five-Day Rule

The rule requires that the written request be submitted at least five court days prior to the target event. The object of this advance notice is to allow sufficient time for all stakeholders to be notified and weigh in on whether the judge should permit access. The judge may also waive the five-day rule for good cause.

Local Rules

Some courts have created local rules that address media access. Some courts list very specific, designated areas where cameras and other electronic recording devices may operate. Courts post their local rules on their websites.

Special Orders

Sometimes special circumstances call for situational arrangements. Presiding or supervising judges are allowed to impose restrictions on media presence in areas outside of courtrooms, such as building entrances and exits and hallways.

Denials

If a judge denies the request for media coverage, sometimes the court's media contact person can facilitate a mutually acceptable compromise between the judge and the media, such as limiting access to certain times and places or using a pool arrangement. There is no right to a hearing if a judge denies a request, although the judge may grant a hearing.

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